

MAY 2022



SEND POLICY

**HORIZONS EDUCATION TRUST
AMERICAN LANE, HUNTINGDON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE PE29 1TQ**

Key elements:

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy for Riverside Meadows Academy is available on the website.

Special Education and disabilities (SEND) Policy

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Part 1 - Introduction and context

Riverside Meadows Academy is a Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) specialist school for 110 pupils aged 11-18 years and is split across two sites in St Neots (Main site) and Wisbech. It is part of Horizons Education Trust. We acknowledge the SEND code of practice 0-25 (2020 updated). Through the process of review we aspire to deliver the best special education practice.

The Head Teacher will review this Policy and inform the Trustee Board of any updates.

SENCO responsibilities:

SENCO for school – Head Teacher assisted by Senior Management and wider leadership team.

Values regarding SEND:

Riverside Meadows Academy has identified the following values that influence and impact on all our work with special educational needs and disabilities:

- Moral purpose
- Trust and respect
- Listening
- Integrity
- Communication
- Building confidence
- Empathy
- Collaboration
- Enabling Innovation

Riverside Meadows Academy has both strength and commitment to put the needs and best interests of SEND pupils first. We expect all staff to show determination to prepare our young people for adulthood to participate in their local community.

Every teacher, Teaching & Learning Mentor (TLM) and Family Support Worker (FSM) shares responsibility for ensuring our pupils maximise their learning and opportunities to wider educational experiences. All staff share responsibility for ensuring safeguarding, our welfare standards and health and safety compliance.

Four broad areas of need:

Special educational needs Code of practice identifies 4 broad areas of need:

We recognise that most pupils have co- occurring conditions (Autism Education Trust) beyond the main need identified. We recognise that our pupils are likely to have layers of need identified at different point in their lives and therefore we need provision in school to be flexible to meet need. Access to provision will be reflected in personalised timetables.

Table 1: SEN code of practice four areas of need correlated with AET practice standards from assessment toolkit recommended.

SEND areas of need.	Autism areas of need
<p>Communication and Interaction</p> <p>Many pupils have an identified social communication need or expressive language need.</p>	<p>Social Communication</p> <p>Social Interaction:</p>
<p>Cognition and learning</p> <p>Most pupils at the school have learning delay in terms of their cognition and learning.</p>	<p>Social imagination & flexibility</p>
<p>Social, emotional and Mental health</p> <p>Most pupils have experienced social barriers to inclusion. Most have an emotional need either short or long term. Most have a mental health condition or indicators.</p>	<p>Emotional understanding and self – awareness</p> <p>Independence and participation</p>
<p>Sensory and or physical needs</p> <p>Some pupils have identified Sensory processing needs: Visual impairment Hearing Impairment Physical disability</p>	<p>Sensory processing</p>
<p>Co – occurring conditions</p>	<p>Medical conditions Chromosome disorders</p> <p>More than one area of need identified for pupils.</p>

Autism:

It is considered that nationally 1 in 100 children in the UK could be identified as on the autism spectrum. (National Autistic Society). We now track areas of difference using the AET toolkit.

School Information:

Our school website has an update termly of our school information.

Most pupils at Riverside Meadows Academy have social, emotional and mental health difficulties and some have ADHD or autism.

Attendance for 2021-22 (to April 2022) was 76% which includes absence due to Covid-19.

Most pupils speak English as their first language with Lithuanian (1) identified as another language noted on the school census return in 2022.

There are 52 pupils who receive Free school meals and 84 pupils for whom the school receives Pupil Premium Funding (April 2022).

The Academy has a staffing structure which provides a leadership team, teachers, specialist teachers and TLMs, FSWs, SEND caseworkers and a therapist, admin, finance, premises and cleaners.

Our locations, like the rest of Cambridgeshire, are subject to demographic change and increase in population. In order to respond the Trustees have approved a Sustainability of placements plan and have frequent discussions with Cambridgeshire Local Authority to meet demographic demand.

SEN register:

The school receives new admissions until pupil numbers are met in relation to 110 purchase places as agreed with Education Funding Authority (ESFA).

We will review the current register to comply with SEND Code of practice and note the main area of need and list other areas for the census return.

Compliance with related policies and guidance:

Our Special education and disabilities (SEND) Policy is a key overarching policy and it has been written to with reference to the following documents:

1. This Policy complies with the statutory requirements:
SEND Code of practice 0 – 25 (2014 updated 2020)
The Schools SEN Information report regulations (2014) - Sections 19(c), 26(3), 32 and 49 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and 'The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations' 2014.
2. The Policy has been developed with links to Riverside Meadows Academy Equalities and diversity Policy. We recognise that the SEND Code of practice has intent to change the culture in schools to provide wider

- parental and pupil involvement and co-production of strategic plans. There is an Equalities Accessibility Plan and provides regular monitoring updates on the school environment and health and safety.
3. The school has reviewed the policy and procedures to comply with 'Supporting children with medical conditions' (2015) and the related DFE templates for health care plans and administration of medicines.
 4. In terms of curriculum accessibility the school has reviewed The National Curriculum in England Key stage 1 and 2 Framework document.
 5. In terms of safeguarding the school has reviewed training with 'Keeping safe in education', PREVENT and safer care of conduct, LSCB guidance documents including Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Domestic violence.
 6. Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Physical Intervention Policy and Child Protection Policies are reviewed in line with statutory recommendations.
 7. In terms of professional practice this policy links to Trust Pay Policy (2021)
 8. In terms of transport the school will publish on the school website the Cambridgeshire Local Authority transport policy statement and eligibility criteria and the School travel plan.

Longer term view for our pupils:

We raise aspirations for all pupils with SEND and support them to prepare for adulthood. The school has published the Gatsby indicators and the provision at Riverside Meadows Academy and a comprehensive 'Moving on Booklet'.

At Riverside Meadows Academy pupils can access supported living if requested, vocational and work related training or participation and access to the local community.

The school will keep under review school-specific information related to arrangements for providing a graduated response to children's SEN in the context of a special school and arrangements for supporting pupils with disabilities and medical conditions.

Objectives of our SEND Policy:

1. Identify the SEND needs of our pupils and continue to do so over time and to plan provision to address these needs.
2. Identify a participation strategy to support the involvement of parents and carers and our pupils in the wider services available.
3. To train all staff to work within the guidance provided in the SEND 'Code of Practice' and to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of our operational delivery.
4. Develop whole school approaches to the management of SEND provision that is focussed on the individual rather than institutionalised culture for the Academy.

5. Plan and monitor the impact of policies upon SEND provision provided in relation to this Policy and related Policies.
6. To provide school information through the 'School Offer' on our school website and links to the Local Offer.
7. To link the SEND Policy to Riverside Meadows Academy values.

Part 2: What we plan to do?

Local Offer: Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.

Riverside Meadows Academy will fully co-operate and work with Cambridgeshire Local Authority and other Local Authorities to develop a Local offer for parents and carers, prospective parents, pupils and professionals. We have links to the Cambridgeshire Local Offer on our website and keep live the School offer as information for parents and carers.

Riverside Meadows Academy will support the Cambridgeshire SEND strategy and focus upon Specialist Provision and outcomes identified by the Local Authority document:

See link to Cambridgeshire Local Offer:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/about-cambridgeshire-s-local-offer/>

Part 3: Identifying special needs and disabilities

'Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations' (2014). Outline that schools must publish detailed information about their arrangements for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN.

We publish the School offer on the Riverside Meadows Academy school website. SEND Code of Practice (2014) identifies 4 broad categories of need:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

We also recognise that individual children often have needs that cut across all these four areas and also their needs may change over time.

For instance as mentioned in the SEND Code of practice 5.33:

'Speech, language and communication needs can also be a feature of a number of other areas of SEN, and children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder may have needs across all areas'.

From September 2016 we adopted elements of the Autism Education Trust guidance to track wider areas of need for our pupils with Autism. These descriptors link to the SEND code of practice areas of need but not exactly.

At Riverside Meadows Academy we consider the following indicators are not SEN but may impact upon progress and attainment:

- Disability (The Code of practice outlines that schools give regard to reasonable adjustments under Equalities legislation.
- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- English as an additional language
- Being in receipt of Pupil premium grant
- Being a Looked after child.
- Being a child of a service man or woman.

We accept that identification of behaviour is not an acceptable way to describe a special educational need. Any concerns related to a pupil's behaviour should be described as a response to a pupil need. We ask staff to describe the pupil responses and have an expectation that antecedents or triggers may be identified overtime.

Riverside Meadows Academy recognises the Cambridgeshire Local Authority Behaviour Policy and guidance documents available on our website.

Part 4: A graduated response to SEN support

The Cambridgeshire Local Offer has publication of the graduated steps and procedures from initial identification leading to Education, Health and Care Plan. The flow chart is an appendix to this policy and indicated expected time frames linked to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (updated 2020).

All our pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care plans on admission.

The school maintains a special education needs register which records information using the Assess – plan – do – review cycle recommended in the SEND Code of Practice (2014 and 2020 updated).

In a special school the class teacher collates information to create a provision map in order to ensure that targeted support for the Education, Health and Care Plan is implemented.

Prior to Annual Review of the EHCP the teacher will collate information to create an Education action plan and other priorities will be added at the review meeting with parents, carers and other lead professionals from health and social care.

Admission arrangements:

The school receives information papers about pupils as part of the SEND admission process from Statutory Assessment Team for Cambridgeshire Local Authority. Advice is taken before papers are distributed from a Cambridgeshire County Resources panel to guide the allocation of resources using a Local Authority funding matrix system.

After placement the school adds the pupil to the school SEN register and Pupil roll. It is at this point all the pupil special needs are listed to create a provision map. The class teacher is responsible for the collation of a provision map and plans for all interventions. On admission the school will assess risk and as required will prepare a risk assessment based upon the likelihood of risk and when available information from Social Care from safety plans as part of the Child in need procedures.

The Academy monitors the quality of learning and teaching and provides quality assurance for all SEND provision. As part of this process we can quickly identify any pupil under – achievement and develop intervention plans in discussion with parents. Simultaneously, we also identify staff training requirements to ensure all safeguarding and welfare requirements are met for the individual pupil.

Part 5: Managing pupils needs on the SEN register:

At Riverside Meadows Academy we have a responsive process as follows:

1. Admission papers received from Statutory Assessment Team from Cambridgeshire Local Authority or neighbouring authority and the school will decide if the placement is compatible with the needs of other learners and that the Academy can plan provision with the resources made available.
2. Prior to admission the school meets parents and carers and the prospective pupil to create an initial plan for the personalised timetable.

3. The parents provide information about health, medical conditions and disabilities to be used in co – production to create an Education, Health and Care Plan. We shall consult advice from health professionals with appropriate permissions from parents and carers.
4. The tutor will devise a provision map of all the SEND provision required and timetables are designed.
5. The Head Teacher with the Senior Management team will keep the Local Authority matrix / banding information live so that the pupil receives the resources required.
6. The tutor will complete an audit of the staff competencies to ensure that staff have required training and competency to undertake any medical interventions that are sign off and monitored by health professionals. The Head Teacher with assistance from the Senior Management Team will audit the workforce competencies mapped against the expectation of class provision maps and report outcomes to the Trustees.
7. The tutor will create a Learning Pathway that will be reviewed and monitored by the Senior Management team and shared with parents and carers.
8. The tutor will attend Pupil Progress meetings to set targets and to discuss progress with learning.
9. The school audits the pupil interventions and the Coordinator reports to the Head Teacher and governors and recommends adjustments to tackle under – performance.
10. The school will commission or purchase additional specialist support if there is a staffing competency gap and this will be funded from Academy reserves.

Exit from the SEN register or adjustments:

Due to the complexity of special education needs and or disabilities of pupils that attend Riverside Meadows Academy we describe this as an amendment to the SEN register rather than an exit. Many pupils that attend Riverside Meadows Academy will require life-long access to a range of specialist services in the public and voluntary sector, and support from health and social care.

Part 6: Supporting parents and carers

The school offer on the school website meets the requirements of the SEN information report (2014) and the school will provide an annual report to parents about the effectiveness of SEND provision in relation to best practice for a special school provider together with the annual Academy Trustees report.

The Riverside Meadows Academy will provide links about other agencies that can offer support to our pupils and the parents on the website. We will not endorse commercial products but strive to provide helpful links and tips to inform parents about charitable organisations that can provide information or assistance with an advocacy component and or funding.

Admissions to special schools are guided by policies from Local Authorities and this is published on their Local Offer website page. The school does not manage a direct admission to school.

Accreditations:

Riverside Meadows Academy offers a wide range of accreditations for our Key stage 4 and Post 16 pupils which can be found on the website together with information about results from the previous academic year. Our 'Moving On' booklet describes in comprehensive detail opportunities available locally and the learning pathways post 16.

We make arrangements for our pupils to access examinations with an additional assessment when required by any awarding body and will pay for this assessment through the top up funding provided for individual pupils in addition to examination fees or the cost of additional supervision of staff.

Transitions from Year 7 to Post 16 in school and transition from school to another education provider are described in booklets available on our school website. We provide pupils with taster visits as required. There is considerable support and reassurance provided and additional planning to support our pupils with SEMH, autism or communication and interaction identified needs.

School organisation plan:

In planning our school organisation plan in the spring term we ask staff to provide their preferences for roles in the school. We also match staff competencies and experience to create the new class teams. Parents and carers are fully informed and we send a letter to inform the names of staff for the following academic year and a welcome letter from the new class teacher.

Part 7: Supporting pupils with medical conditions

The school considers the requirements of 'Supporting children with medical conditions' (2015) and provides detail about the framework of staff expectations to maintain high standards of safeguarding and welfare for our pupils.

Multi-disciplinary Team meetings are held with Health & Social Care professionals to support our pupils with medical conditions and or emotional and mental health needs with the Head Teacher. The school recognises that all pupils with these conditions must be supported to have a full access and entitlement to education including school visits and physical activity.

At Riverside Meadows Academy we cater for the needs of disabled pupils and we ensure compliance with Equality Act 2010. We make huge efforts to provide inclusion opportunities and reasonable adjustments to enable participation and enjoyment of school and social activities.

The school has a register for asthma and epilepsy and retains information to support pupil information on SIMS. Every class teacher and staff team will have access to this information which is updated from Cambridgeshire Community Services.

Other related Policies include: Intimate Care Policy, Child protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct about appropriate professional boundaries and logging any concerns to four designated safeguarding leads.

Part 8: Monitoring and evaluation of SEND provision and operational delivery

Riverside Meadows Academy has a monitoring and evaluation programme to ensure high quality assurance standards.

We do this with audits of provision for education, health and social care on a termly basis.

The school has a comprehensive programme of Learning Walks collated as a feedback report with photographs or staff / pupil responses or comments.

Members of the advisory group visit the school and participate in Learning Walks or contribute to briefings or meetings in school.

The collation of this SEND information and discussion about new priorities enables the SEND Policy to be kept under a continual cycle of review as recommended in the SEND Code of Practice (2014 updated 2020).

The Academy intends to build upon success to enhance SEND provision for a wider range of pupils as an area special school. There is an embedded culture of inclusion and aspiration for our pupils.

The Academy provides a lead on system leadership and have a shared intent to support Continued Professional Development and research for special education.

Part 9: Training and resources

How is the school funded?

Riverside Meadows Academy is funded as an Academy from the Education Funding Agency.

There is a matrix funded system in Cambridgeshire to allocate resources from the County Council High Needs Block according to the needs of children.

How are training needs of staff identified and planned?

The training needs of staff are planned annually responding to the provision requirements, identified training needs of staff from appraisal or to implement Trustee priorities.

Riverside Meadows Academy has staff induction for all new staff and training is identified on the induction log. Teachers are also introduced from induction to the career expectations framework used in appraisal that links to pay progression and career development.

Riverside Meadows Academy has an annual calendar that identifies CPD and the focus of meetings termly

In order to maintain high standards of quality first teaching (QFT) all staff are encouraged to undertake additional SEND training either from experienced teachers at Riverside Meadows Academy or from external specialist providers.

The Head Teacher or representative attends SENCO briefings convened by the Local Authority and leads the local SENCO Forum.

Riverside Meadows Academy is a member of FLSE and NASEN. Partnerships have importance to us and Academy representatives attend local and National meetings. We have many links for SEND which are available on our website. Our Executive Head Teacher and Head Teacher attend Local Authority boards and organisations to share expertise and to contribute to policy and development.

Part 10: School Roles and responsibilities for SEND

The SEND Trustee –

Acting Head Teacher (SENCO): Caroline Place
Designated Safeguarding Lead: Caroline Place
Pupil Premium: Hazel Gearing
Responsible for Looked after children: Callum Lawe

Member of staff responsible for managing the schools responsibility for meeting the medical needs of pupils and school SENCO: Head Teacher

Responsible for EHCP – tutor and administration is collated by SEND Caseworker Louisa Mart.

Part 11: Storing and managing information

Documents are stored in accordance with the Data protection Act (2018) Section 46 of the Freedom of information Act (2000) and Information Management Guidance 2019 which details how long documents should be stored and what should be retained in school not sent to a new education provider.

The school has a Confidentiality Policy and all staff are expected to adhere to this guidance and failure to do so will lead to staff disciplinary action.

Part 12: Reviewing the SEND Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head Teacher.

Part 13 – Equality Plan and accessibility

Riverside Meadows Academy acknowledges the DDA as amended by the SEN and disabilities Act 2001 which placed a duty upon Local Authorities and schools like Riverside Meadows Academy to increase over time the accessibility of schools for disabled pupils and implementation information of plans. Riverside Meadows Academy provides an Equality Plan which contains an Accessibility plan to meets these requirements.

There are regular environment learning walks that provide information about the curriculum and premises in addition to staff and Trustee contributions.

The physical environment of the Academy is regularly monitored and the Head Teacher has provided a strategic document approved by Trustees called 'Planning for sufficiency of SEND placements at Riverside Meadows Academy' which linked to Building bulletin 108. In 2021 we use BB104 as our guide and further work is in operation to improve the school building for suitability.

The website lists outcomes of Equality plan after staff consultation every spring term. Riverside Meadows Academy maintains reviews of accessibility issues for disabled pupils.

Most pupils require transport to and from school so our emphasis for extended school activities is to provide short activities in both upper and lower school in addition to residential activities.

Riverside Meadows Academy has pupils on the case load of the speech and language therapy team from CCS Trust; so communication and interaction has high priority status.

Parents can contact staff directly or can arrange to meet staff at school. Staff will return phone calls the same day. Although we accept email requests we do encourage parents to meet with staff face to face as far as possible to maintain relationships and to avoid any misunderstandings from written tone and explanations.

Part 14: Bullying and harassment

Riverside Meadows Academy has an Anti-bullying policy and a statement to inform visitors in reception about zero tolerance to abusive behaviours from

visitors in a special school with vulnerable children and young people.

The Academy through the RSE curriculum introduces opportunities to support understanding of bullying and the impacts that can move into adulthood if not addressed. We plan activities for Anti-bullying week in November with the school council. The school uses restorative approaches and encourages a culture of openness so that staff always approachable and have readiness to listen to disclosures or to flag concerns to senior managers using the log of concern procedures.

Riverside Meadows Academy is an inclusive learning environment and this is evident for our parents by the participation of all our pupils. We have theme days such as International Day, Arts Day or Maths week or Arts festivals which bring the community together.

Parents know that we have policies to safeguard our pupils and these can be found on our school website. We enable our pupils with opportunities to become independent and gain personal resilience and appropriate assertiveness within their personal and social relationships.

We have specific approaches to support our pupils with Autism to deal with new situations and to plan using visual schedules and social stories so that new events or social situations can be rehearsed to alleviate anxieties.

We train our staff to appreciate that the actions and responses of our pupils with autism can provoke fear and unpredictable responses from members of the local community. Simultaneously of meeting new people can provoke for pupils with autism a sense of anxiety because they worry they may read social cues incorrectly.

The school has highlighted e- safety as a priority which means we need to be vigilant to safeguard our pupils. Our staff and parents are aware that our pupils are vulnerable to bullying or abuse online. We advise parents and carers and our staff to maintain supervision and revisit the e- safety advice to pupils to support their understanding.

Part 15: Dealing with complaints

The school follows the Horizons Education Trust Complaints Policy which has three stages with view of dealing with any matters on an informal basis. To support this process the school uses the Riverside Meadows Academy complaint tracker.

Parents are encouraged to use our school feedback form and often parents provide individual staff members or class team with compliments which we like to feedback to acknowledge their hard work and dedication to our pupils.

If a complaint still cannot be resolved after support from the Head Teacher the final stage is to ask to meet with a Trustee of the Academy.

Appendices - Available on website:

- Graduated response flow chart
- SEN information report
- School offer

Date:	Approved by Executive Head – 26 May 2022 For and on behalf of Horizons Education Trust
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Riverside Meadows Academy address and contact phone number:

Almond Road,
St Neots, Cambs
PE19 1DZ

01223 471791

Policy agreed on: _____

Signed on behalf of the Trustees _____

Committee: _____ TLW _____

Author: _____ Kim Taylor _____

Review date (optional): _____

Website Y/N